

Dante's inferno essay sample



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Every great poem has a setting that signifies the story or a setting that has a cultural significance to the concept of the story. In the "Inferno", setting and culture are important roles especially because it was written in the early 14th century. Florence, Italy was founded in 59 b. c. by the Romans. Dante was known as a literary figure, he was born roughly around 1265 and passed in 1321. There are many cultural aspects of Italy that are in the Inferno, such as Michelangelo's art, the use of the vernacular, Dante's works and others. Significant and well-known people such as: Virgil; considered the greatest of Latin poets, Aristotle; a great philosopher, Farinata; a Ghibelline political leader, Count Ugolino; an Italian nobleman, and others were in The Divine Comedy. In the "Inferno", there were many political arguments. Dante, writing the Inferno shortly after being exiled, makes his allegations in various ways. He condemns political figures with whom he disagreed by dispersing them ruthlessly throughout different circles of hell.

Dante asserts throughout the poem his political belief that church and state should be separate but equal powers; Lucifer chews on Judas (betrayer of Christ, the ultimate spiritual leader), Cassius and Brutus (betrayers of Caesar, the ultimate political leader). Hell's final circle consists of treachery against religion and government. One cultural value revealed in the Inferno is faith. The Inferno shows humanity occupying a special place and how we are all directly linked to God who is within reach of all of us. Dante's experiences with political, religious and cultural matters were a driving force for his development of The Divine Comedy. Do you believe in love at first sight? Dante did, and he never fell out of love for Beatrice. When he first laid eyes on her at nine years old, his mind was set to be with her forever.

However, the time range he fell in love didn't consider his feelings. By the time Dante was 12 years old, as well as Beatrice, he had been promised an arranged marriage with a 10 year old named Gemma Donati. In medieval Florence, parents chose their children's spouses in negotiations that relied far more on political and economic considerations than frivolous things like love.

Like Dante and Virgil, Beatrice corresponds to a historical personage. Although the details of her life aren't thorough, it is certainly known that Dante fell passionately in love with her as a young man. His poetry was based on Beatrice and how his love was so strong for her. There wasn't a single line of poetry about Gemma or their children in Dante's writings. It's not clear whether the feeling was mutual or not, but Dante's love for this woman became one of the driving forces in his life and the muse behind his poetry. Finally, Dante realized that his love for Beatrice would never be consummated. He found that he was falling in love more with the act of writing love poetry than with Beatrice herself. Then in 1290, Beatrice died of an illness and Dante was devastated. In his poetry, her character changed from the object of his earthly affections to a divine, celestial character, one who would play a major role in the Divine Comedy. Dante's entire journey throughout afterlife targets to find Beatrice. Critics view Beatrice as an allegorical representation of spiritual love.

Beatrice's chief role conveyed cultural values because the rules of arranged marriage have been brought up many times in culture. Their parents believed strongly about who they shall marry. Beatrice's cultural role is very significant in the Inferno because Dante's journey was based on her. Another

character whose chief role was to convey cultural values was a political leader named Farinata. Farinata was a Ghibelline political leader who exists among the Heretics in the Sixth Circle of Hell. Farinata was an enemy to the party of Dante's ancestors whom were Guelphs. Farinata's Ghibellines defeated the Guelphs twice but the Guelphs succeeded both times in returning to power. Overall, between the parties, the political views tied in with Dante, and made Farinata a character who showed a cultural value in Dante's Inferno.

Dante's work being written in the early 14th century throughout Italy has a great significance and matter crucially to his story. One way time and place matters to this work is the piece being in Italy, the middle ages, when the population was 13, 000 and was eventing in an economic growth. Dante's life period had many changes, such as technical advances and events. He spent his life dealing with battles, being exiled and writing poems. What was so significant was his poems were how different languages took a great impact. His masterpiece, The Divine Comedy, was written after he was exiled from his homeland. Dante was considered to be on the side of the White Guelphs and because of his public criticism of the Black Guelph, his sentence of exile leaded up to that of death later on.

Dante also came in conflict with the Church. He reviewed the Church as an immoral institution wrongfully involved in temporal and political affairs. Dante believed that the Church had lost sight of its original spiritual purpose. In his poem Dante not only verbally attacked his enemies, but also made convincing arguments against the Catholic Church. Dante is able to express his views on the role of the Church more effectively by the setting of the

Inferno being in hell. By putting the Church in hell, Dante is getting revenge on the Church. Considering his exile and the views on the Church, place and time matter to the Inferno. If Dante lived in the 21st century and wrote the Inferno in America, the book would not be released and he would most likely be in distress with many services. Besides the negative future-ifs, the Inferno gives readers a sense to how important figures in Italy were known. Though the reader's opinion might be different from Dante's, one could connect their cultural experiences with this piece.

It's common for readers to relate their own personal experiences with a piece/novel, the author—being the author's life is commonly expressed through their novel—and the character's themselves. My beliefs, being Roman Catholic, automatically connect with Dante. Dante followed Roman Catholicism, and strongly believed in God. In life, we all have a mentor/guider to help us through our journey in life. Virgil represents a mentor to Dante, and Dante has yet to learn about hell when he walks through the gates. This represents someone in our life, guiding us through our journey here on life. My father would be Virgil in this case, being my friend through life and afterlife. One looks up to at least one person similar to how Dante looks up to Virgil.

Dante uses the Inferno as his own personal revenge by putting them in hell and giving them a punishment. Today's time, including myself, humans seek revenge on enemies in their own way; Dante using his strength of writing, used a book to assign his revenge. Even the expression, " go to hell" connects to Dante's Inferno by him actually writing them in hell. Another connection with this piece is how Dante didn't agree with the church. Today

some Roman Catholic teenagers drink, smoke, fornicate and still practice their religious views. By teenagers doing this, they aren't agreeing with their Religion/Church. Although nobody today can connect and relate to Dante being exiled, we can relate to the small opinions and actions of cultural experiences.

A legendary piece isn't an everyday love story, tragic death or a biography, it has something that can linger on and for the readers to relate and/or compare to. The "Inferno" does just that, it ties in Dante's culture. A reader can compare how cultural norms change, and relate to how Dante views people by their sins. Dante's "Inferno" also informs as well as entertains. It flourishes the information about the 14th century and our illustrious individuals of that time. Readers will acquire additional facts about those individuals, and even recognize the personal actualities as Dante places them in hell because of his personal opinion. Dante informs readers about culture of his time by the reasons he put individuals in the "Inferno".

In comparison of norms, arranged marriages and battles have shifted over time. If Dante would have fallen in love in the 21st century, he could have made the decision to marry Beatrice and he wouldn't have been exiled due to the freedom of our country. A great poet/author writes his opinions in a poetic/story approach. The question one might think after knowing background information about Dante was how diverse his poems would be if he existed in today's date. Dante writes so significantly because he had multiple inspirations; Virgil and Beatrice. Although readers may gain information about a punitive poem, the "Inferno" wouldn't be accepted in

today's range of poems. Dante's culture sets of an expressive aim in the "Inferno", and cultivates The Divine Comedy.